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RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 3803
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 6100
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 2913
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RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 6332
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 8375
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 1159
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 1787
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RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 000812

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR X0XX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[1](#)1. Mideast

[1](#)2. DPRK: Missile Launch

Key stories in the media:

The Jerusalem Post reported that the Netanyahu government is conducting a thorough policy review in which all diplomatic components -Q from the Roadmap to the Annapolis process -Q are being

reevaluated. The Jerusalem Post said that it is for this reason the Prime Minister's Office was unwilling to comment last week on Avigdor Lieberman's first speech as foreign minister, in which he trashed the Annapolis process but said Israel was obligated by the Roadmap, a document whose final goal is a two-state solution. The Jerusalem Post reported that Netanyahu has no intention of addressing in detail issues such as whether the government is bound by the Roadmap or the Annapolis process until the policy review is completed.

The media reported that yesterday PM Netanyahu kicked off his new term by assembling a huge 15-member cabinet. The Jerusalem Post reported that he gave equal representation to dovish ministers and to those considered in the middle, while the cabinet tilted slightly toward the hawks.

Haaretz quoted Israeli defense officials as saying over the weekend that they are concerned about the increased involvement of Fatah-affiliated militants in attacks against Jews in the West Bank in the past two months.

All media reported that on Saturday afternoon a 16-year-old Bedouin girl launched a lone gun attack on a Border Police base at Tel Shoket junction in the Negev. The base guard killed her.

Haaretz quoted U.S. special envoy to the Middle East George Mitchell as saying that the Arab peace initiative will be part of the Obama administration's policy toward the region.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Israel is expected to boycott the UN fact-finding mission to Gaza, which will be led by Jewish South African Justice Richard Goldstone.

The media reported that on Saturday, for the second time in four days, IDF troops identified and killed two terrorists who were in the process of planting a bomb near the border fence in Gaza.

Yediot reported that Iran has renewed the arms smuggling route to Hamas via Sudan. This time the arms smuggling is being done with the help of Iranians allies including Syrians and Hizbullah agents who operate in various countries in Africa and Yemen.

Haaretz reported that yesterday IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi dismissed Israeli soldiers' accounts of wrongdoings during the recent offensive in Gaza as "completely unfounded."

The Jerusalem Post and Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that on Saturday the U.S. Senate moved to fully fund aid for Israel in its budget.

The Jerusalem Post reported that the Mossawa Center, an Israeli-Arab advocacy center, is sounding the alarm against what it sees as potentially harmful policies that the new government may espouse. The organization's director Jafar Farah will leave for the U.S. on April 19 to meet with Obama administration members, Congressmen, and representatives of Jewish and Arab-American organizations.

The Jerusalem Post quoted New York officials as saying on Friday that the New York Police Department has plans to beef up security at the city's synagogues and other Jewish sites amid escalating tensions between Israel and Iran.

Haaretz reported that Germany will host a summit in June that will include PM Netanyahu and about 10 other Israeli ministers.

Israel Hayom reported that Chief of Staff Ashkenazi left on Friday for Strasbourg for a brief meeting with the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen. The meeting was held at Admiral Mullen's request. The two men discussed military and security issues that are pertinent to the two armies. Haaretz cited the satisfaction of Israeli officials in Europe over the appointment of Danish PM Andreas Fogh Rasmussen as NATO's new secretary general. The Israeli officials noted that he has taken a very friendly approach to Israel in the past few years.

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Today major Hebrew-language media led with socio-economic issues. The GOI's National Employment Service reported yesterday that a record 20,072 people lost their jobs in March. Yediot reported that

PM Netanyahu plans a Qdramatic cutQ in social expenditures.

HaQaretz reported that the director of the Aerospace Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Talgat Amangeldyuly Musabayev, told the newspaper last week that Kazakhstan wants to buy surveillance satellites from Israel.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Generation Connect (www.smallplateradio.com), a new Internet radio show based in Portland, OR, is debuting with a focus on creating connections between American, Israeli, and Palestinian teens.

Erratum: The poll cited here on Friday said that 35% (and not three quarters) of the world population view Israel as an aggressive country.

11. Mideast:

Summary:

Senior Middle East affairs analyst Zvi Bar'el wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: QWhat if Washington decides to join the condemnation [of Israel]? After all, it will have a good excuse: Lieberman.

Shlomo Avineri, Hebrew University Professor of Political Science and former director-general of the Foreign Ministry, wrote in Ha'aretz: QPerhaps Hamas is the key [to peace in the region]. If that's the case, it's difficult to expect that peace can be established in our region.

Block Quotes:

1I. "LiebermanQs Paradoxical Strength"

Senior Middle East affairs analyst Zvi Bar'el wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (4/5): QWhat will happen if Washington does not automatically veto every resolution condemning Israel in the Security Council? Or worse, what if Washington decides to join the condemnation? After all, it will have a good excuse: Lieberman. Paradoxically, Lieberman is likely to become a part of Obama's new doctrine of global arrangements: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not end, but Israeli obduracy will enhance, not diminish, the United States' standing in the Middle East. While Lieberman can continue to bang on his tom-toms every time somebody mentions the phrase Qdiplomatic process,Q he will not be able to direct forces much larger than him or Israel. He will be the perfect excuse for these forces to act. This is his strength, nothing more.

II. "What to Speak with Hamas about"

Shlomo Avineri, Hebrew University Professor of Political Science and former director-general of the Foreign Ministry, wrote in Ha'aretz (4/6): QPerhaps it is worthwhile talking to Hamas -- not about its contribution to peace but rather about what is stated in its covenant. Perhaps those who espouse the view that we must talk with Hamas will first talk with it about these subjects? Who knows, perhaps it will change its principles? I do not expect this to happen exactly, but I am certainly curious to know what those who think Hamas is the key to peace in the Middle East will say about these things. And perhaps they are actually correct, perhaps Hamas is the key. If that's the case, it's difficult to expect that peace can be established in our region.

12. DPRK: Missile Launch:

Summary:

Military correspondent Amos Harel wrote in the independent,

left-leaning HaQaretz: QThe country that will be watching the United StatesQ behavior [vis-`-vis North Korea] with a particular interest will be Iran.

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: QNorth Korea, Hamas, and Iran cannot exchange their belligerency for normalcy. Why? Because, paradoxically, they derive their legitimacy from a constant state of confrontation and threat. Block Quotes:

II. "Iran -- a Side Observer"

Military correspondent Amos Harel wrote in the independent, left-leaning HaQaretz (4/6): QThe launching of the Northern Korean missile into space yesterday, even if most Western intelligence branches agree that it failed, is an act of blatant defiance by Pyongyang against the U.S.... The country that will be watching the United StatesQ behavior with a particular interest will be Iran. In a few months Washington is supposed to start a diplomatic dialogue with Tehran, whose ultimate purpose will be to contain the Iranian nuclear program.... A little more than a year ago the previous Israeli leadership nourished the hope that the U.S. might give Israel the green light to act in its place.... The connection between North Korea and Iran is a deep one. Dr. Efraim Kam, the deputy chief of IsraelQs National Defense Research Institute, says that IranQs missile program is based on technical know-how from Pyongyang.

II. "Learning form Pyongyang"

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (4/6): QThere's a lesson to be learned about North Korea's launching over the weekend of a Taepodong II rocket -- and it isn't just that the more treacherous the crisis, the less likely it is that multilateralism will provide a solution. The launching was yet another step in North Korea's march toward building and perfecting a nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missile. North Korea is a unique case. But beyond Korea's benighted borders, the overarching lesson to Western leaders is: Don't threaten what you can't deliver. This is because despotic regimes like North Korea -- but also Iran and Hamas in Gaza -- use Western failure to follow through to bolster their position. More than that: North Korea, Iran and Hamas relish crises because they invariably demonstrate (a) that their people are under siege by pitiless foreigners; and (b) that only their leadership and the people's willingness to sacrifice can ultimately protect them from the alien threat. The people of North Korea, Gaza and, arguably, Iran, know they would be economically better off if their leaders played by civilized rules. And yet there is every reason to believe -- certainly in the case of Gaza and North Korea -- that given a genuinely free choice, the masses would still opt for the current leadership. The lesson, therefore, is: North Korea, Hamas, and Iran cannot exchange their belligerency for E normalcy. Why? Because, paradoxically, they derive their legitimacy from a constant state of confrontation and threat.

CUNNINGHAM